

VZCZCXR00388

PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK RUEHMOS

DE RUEHGB #1804 1491646

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

P 291646Z MAY 06

FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD

TO RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4771

INFO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 001804

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/29/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: IRAN HOSTED CONFERENCE OF IRAQ'S NEIGHBORS
CANCELLED

REF: SECSTATE 86446

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert S. Ford for
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Political Counselor delivered reftel points to Foreign Minister Hoshyiar Zebari on May 28. FM Zebari responded that due to a schedule conflict, the Iraq neighbors conference, scheduled for May 31 to June 1 in Iran was cancelled and a new date has not been set. June 10-11 was proposed but that would conflict with Jordan's conference of Iraqi religious leaders, said Zebari. Nobody wanted the conference to be held in Iran, Zebari said. But it was Iran's turn to host the neighbors conference since the prior three meetings were held in other neighboring states.

¶2. (C) Political Counselor stressed to Zebari that the US would prefer to see lower level delegates attend the conference. The meeting should be low profile and should focus on highlighting that Iran, due to its support of radical Shia groups and other violations, is part of the problem in Iraq. The meeting, especially with higher level delegations, would give Iran prominence and would paint Iran as a benefactor of Iraq. Zebari responded that Iran would be deeply offended if Iraq was not represented at the Foreign Minister level and the Iraqi Government must make a decision on that matter. He added that his gut feeling was that the meeting in Iran will be postponed and not rescheduled in any near timeframe.

KHALILZAD